



MEDIA STATEMENT

TO: All Media

ATT: News Editors, Health Reporters

For immediate release

Sunday, 23 August 2020

GAUTENG ACTING HEALTH MEC STRENGTHENS OHS COMPLIANCE AND PPE AVAILABILITY AT FACILITIES

Compliance to Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) requirements and the availability of quality Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) across health facilities is a non-negotiable. This is the message conveyed by Gauteng Acting MEC for Health, Jacob Mamabolo who on Saturday, 22 August, convened a Provincial meeting of OHS practitioners which was also attended by representatives of labour.

MEC Mamabolo gave hospitals which did not comply until Wednesday, 26 August to get their house in order. Labour relations in the Department has already been given a directive to crack the whip on non-compliance to ensure that there is 'consequence management'.

The weekend meeting was the first that the Acting MEC held with the provincial OHS structure following his visit to 25 facilities across the Province in the last two weeks ago where he engaged with facility management and labour whilst also being appraised with the state of PPE availability at those institutions.

"The availability of quality PPE lays the basis for the protection of our healthcare workers. Failure to comply with this requirement has the potential to lead to high rate of infections among health workers and decapacitate our human resource capacity to protect the residents of Gauteng.

“I further want to emphasise the importance of having functional OHS committees in our facilities. This is a matter of life and death and must not be treated as a by the way issue,” emphasised MEC Mamabolo.

At the OHS meeting, organised labour was given an opportunity to share their experiences with MEC Mamabolo and he assured them that his door was open to them to discuss any issues that affect workers, especially in relation to occupational health and safety and the availability of PPE.

Given that PPE is a daily consumable, from now onwards, institutions are expected to hold daily meetings before presumption of duty to discuss the availability of quality and appropriate PPE for different work environments. The MEC will be convening weekly OHS and PPE meetings to monitor compliance and address any bottlenecks in the system.

Ends/

Issued by the Department of Health

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